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ABSTRACT

This paper draws on research undertaken during recent years, especially research involving students in classrooms in Australia. The paper focuses on some examples and issues of educational practice occurring in a context where "genre theory"--along with other theories and concepts concerning language and literacy--have been used as a foundation for the English syllabus in years P-10. It has three parts, and in each part the concrete examples used are drawn from the aforementioned research as much as possible. The paper's first part considers some aspects of the politics of genre as applied language educational theory, while the second part uses concepts of "Use," "Tactics," and "Strategy" based on the work of Michel de Certeau to understand some differences between the literacy practices of one student in school and his literacy practices outside of school. The paper's final part raises some issues about established genres in the current context of changes accompanying the large-scale adoption of new information and communications technologies. (Contains 35 references.) (NKA)

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Strategies, Tactics and the Politics of Literacy: Genres and Classroom Practices in a Context of Change.

by Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel

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Genres and Classroom Practices in a Context of Change

Colin Lankshear and Michele Knobel

Plenary Address

Third National Conference on Academic Texts.

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Introduction

This paper will draw on research we have undertaken during recent years, especially research involving students in classrooms in Australia. It will focus on some examples and issues of educational practice occurring in a context where 'genre theory'-along with other theories and concepts concerning language and literacy-have been used as a foundation for the English syllabus in Years P-10.

The paper will have three parts, and in each part we will use concrete examples drawn from our research as much as possible. The first part will consider some aspects of the politics of genre as applied language educational theory. The

second part will use concepts of 'Use,' 'Tactics' and 'Strategy' based on the work of Michel de Certeau to understand some differences between the literacy practices of one student in school and his literacy practices out of school. The final part will raise some issues about established genres in the current context of changes accompanying the large-scale adoption of new Information and Communications Technologies.

1. Politics of Genre as Applied Educational Theory

The Queensland English syllabus aims 'to develop students' ability to compose and comprehend spoken and written English fluently, appropriately, effectively and critically, for a wide range of personal and social purposes' (Department of Education, Queensland 1994: iii). It is based on a text-context model of language, according to which texts are structured in conventional ways to realize people's purposes within particular social and cultural settings. The Syllabus is based on five organizing principles, known as 'growth and development', skills, cultural heritage, genre and critical literacy. Two key assumptions underlie the organizing principle of genre. They are: (i) that knowing and understanding genres enables members of all cultural groups to operate effectively and usefully in society; and (ii) that 'people who understand how genres work can be powerful instruments of critical review and change in any culture' (Department of Education, Queensland 1994: 5).

This reflects one particular application of Hallidayan systemic functional linguistics-known as 'genre theory.' According to this perspective, language and the ways it functions or is used in cultural and situational contexts can be described or 'realized' by means of a systematic framework comprising cultural context, situational context and text (or linguistic) features (known collectively as the 'text-context model'). Thus, this theory of language focuses on the ways in which language comes to be and is used, and not on the traditional goal of linguistics, which is concerned with identifying language structure and universal grammar rules.

In Australia particularly, genre theorists have adopted and adapted Halliday's sociolinguistic theory of language use and put it to work in constructing what they call an 'explicit writing curriculum' (c.f., Kress 1999). That is, the ways in which successful texts are written in school are made explicit to students who hail from marginalized social groups. Genre theorists regard language as a tool or resource that is used to construct meaning, and stretches of language only become meaningful by means of their socially recognized purposes and the contexts in which they occur (Christie 1989: 74, Cope and Kalantzis 1993, Martin 1985). Thus, the cultural context of language is configured by genre theorists as a system or set of general, agreed upon social processes and actions, used by people to achieve their purposes in everyday life (Collerson 1997, Martin 1984: 21, 1993). This includes, for example, applying for work, maintaining relationships, managing a bank account, going to the movies, negotiating who makes coffee in the morning. These sets of social processes and practices are labeled genres, and are characterized as staged, goal oriented, social processes:

They are referred to as social processes because members of a culture interact with each other to achieve them; as goal oriented because they have evolved to get things done; and as staged because it usually takes more than one step for participants to achieve their goals (Martin, Christie and Rothery 1987: 59; original emphases).

The situational context 'is concerned with identifying precisely such general categories which are always active in exercising pressures on our acts or communication, shaping every discourse in any speech variety whatever' (Hasan and Perrett 1994: 186). Thus, analysing the situational context is much more particular in scope than analysing the cultural context of an interaction or text. Accordingly, the situational context is described by genre theorists in Australia in terms of three categories of semantic resources; that is: field, tenor and mode (which are known collectively as the 'register' of a text).

Briefly, 'field' is used to describe the subject matter of a

social activity or process, and indicates the nature of the activity or process. 'Tenor' is used to describe the social roles and relationships amongst participants. Finally, 'mode' is used to identify how language is being used; that is, whether the channel of communication is spoken, visual, or written, and so forth. Each of these variables impinges on meaning-making; subtle shifts in any or all of these variables bring about corresponding shifts in meaning.

Third, from a systemic functional linguistic perspective, texts are both processes and products (Halliday 1985: xxii; see also Gerot and Wignell 1994). Thus, in keeping with Halliday's theory of language use, genre theorists focus on the meaning and function of a text (e.g., how does this text make sense by mean of cohesive ties? how does this text signal its audience? How does this text hide causal relationships?). This 'level' of analysis is known as 'discourse semantics'. More specifically, when analysing the products of a text genre theorists focus more deliberately on clauses and their construction and role in a sentence, and on the role of verbs, nouns, adjectives (or processes, participants or actors, attributes), in order to better understand the ways in which information is delivered in the text and what effects these have on meaning. This approach to text analysis-also known as lexicogrammatical analysis-uses grammatical items to form the 'nuts and bolts' of the systematic framework that plays a key role in systemic functional linguistics.

To summarize, Halliday's goal was to develop a linguistic system of analysis that would describe the ways in which English language functions as social practice. Accordingly, he developed a system of language analysis that accounted for social purposes as well as for cultural and situational contexts. Genre theorists have taken up Halliday's theory of language and applied it to educational purposes by proposing a 'model' of how all texts are 'realized' (i.e., by means of cultural context, social or situational context, and text or linguistic context).

Genre theorists differ from Halliday on another front. They deliberately and explicitly invest their version of systemic

functional linguistics with socially transforming possibilities (e.g., Cope and Kalantzis 1993, Cranny-Francis 1992, Martin 1992, 1993, Christie 1987, 1990, Macken 1990, Martin et al. 1987, Williams 1993). For example, Jim Martin (1993: 161) claims that 'teaching powerful discourses expands a student's meaning potential'. Elsewhere, Mary Macken links genre mastery with access to social power:

Not all members of society hold equal power. One means towards attaining greater power-greater degrees of freedom in action-is to have competence in the use of powerful kinds of texts in a society (Macken 1990: 7).

Indeed, genre theorists claim that 'genres of power' can be identified and taught explicitly to students in ways that are (potentially) socially transforming. For example, Martin (1993: 165) equates teaching powerful discourses and genres with personal empowerment:

> It is the view of genre-based researchers and teacher trainers that subjectivity changes by evolution, not revolution, and that teaching powerful discourses expands a student's meaning potential; language learning is simply not a question of new discourses coming in to replace the old. Beyond this, powerful discourses are not regarded as so ineffable that they cannot be taught; and in Australia there is plenty of evidence that mainstream discourses can be commandeered-and used by women, by Aboriginal people, or by Irish Catholics to change their world.

Thus, key genre theorists in Australia appear to endow genres with autonomous capabilities and properties that enable genres to 'do things' for-and to-people. These key ideas, as we indicated earlier, are embodied in the Queensland English syllabus for Years 1 to 10.

Three points arise from these matters. One is that the syllabus appropriation of genre theory, which is in turn an appropriation from Halliday's work, builds on good intentions with respect to social justice and equity matters in education. The second is that educational developments and

applications of genre theory in Australia have been critiqued by people (notably, Gunther Kress 1993, 1999, Jay Lemke 1995 and Barbara Kamler 1994, 1995) who themselves build strongly on systemic functional linguistics, and who have aimed to promote its educational applications. The third is that at the points where it is taken up in classroom practice things often go wrong.

An Example from Year 7

The Year 7 English program includes literary and non literary genres. The literary genres include narrative-e.g., stories (yarn, parable, adventure story) story board, biography, ballads, personal diary entry and plays-and non narrative text types-e.g., caricature, personal journal entry, lyric poem, formula verse (e.g., cinquain, tarquain, limerick), and public speech. Non literary genres include transactional genre-such as apology, interview, display advertisement, film poster, letter of application-procedures-such as meeting agenda, instructions-reports-including graphs/tables, learning log entry, information report, newspaper/television news report-expositions-including explanation and complaint.

To help teachers implement the syllabus the Education Department and individual authors writing for commercial companies had published books of genre 'proformas' and other practical resources (e.g., Christie et al 1990, Macken 1990). Teachers would commonly show examples of a particular genre-e.g., narrative-photocopied from 'pro forma books' and model it to the class using an overhead projector. Together, the class and teacher would collaboratively construct a narrative using a photocopied proforma on the OHP. These proformas set out the main structural features of the genre being learned-e.g., Orientation, Conflict, Resolution, and Coda: the four main generic structural features of narrative as defined in the Syllabus. Following this the students each would be given a copy of the same proforma and instructed to complete it (e.g., producing their own story, making sure they write something in each section of the proforma. In our experiences of watching new genres being introduced to

students in Years 6 and 7, this process generally takes only an hour or so.

Our example concerns an Asian immigrant student (Tony, age 12) for whom English was his second language. He had been working for a month to produce a narrative. One day during the research period his teacher, in frustration, showed us Tony's draft narrative (more than 20 handwritten pages). She said it was too long for her to spend time correcting and that 'anyway it isn't even a narrative and it doesn't make sense'. We made a copy and took it home for analysis. The following fragment is from the Orientation phase of Tony's story and is representative of the character and quality of the text as a whole.

Doom: Part 1

In the dark Ages, Europe was broke into many different countries.

In the Kingdom of Khimmur, King Little, the ruler of Khimmur gave a mission to one of the brave warriors, Jake Simpson.

His mission was to defeat Shang-Tsung.
Shang-Tsung was an evil person. He tried to rule the whole china, but he never did it, so he went to Europe. Now he is planning to take over the whole Europe. And he has three warriors.

Kung-Lao, before he was a dragon, then

Shang-Tsung made him \into a/ human Raiden, God of Thunder.

Gora, a 2000 year old giant with four hands.

Shang-Tsung also took control of lots of things. He has a vast number of soldiers.

Snow Witch, Lizard King and Baron Sukumvit were also Shang-Tsung's helpers, because Shang-Tsung promised to Share the power with them.

And the Warlock of Firetop Mountain, was the guard for Shang-Tsung's Rich.

"So, I will send you to attack Shang-Tsung" said King Little.

"Isn't there anyone going with me?" asked Jim.

Oh, I nearly forgot to tell you about this" said King Little "There will be two Martial Arts Master from the great Empire of Han, Chung-Hi-San-Wu and Lee-Quan-Lin will go with you. They were send by the Emperor of China."

His text as a whole contains some more or less systematic

errors with tense, plurals and some prepositions (but no worse than several English as a First Language students in the class). At the same time it is evident that at the surface level he has a sound grasp of a range of important writing conventions. These include compiling lists, paragraphing, direct speech conventions, punctuation, and controlling the genre structure of a narrative. His use of '\ /' marks show that he has mastered the convention for inserting text into a sentence already handwritten. When we look beyond the surface features of school literacy, anyone with relevant insider knowledge of adventure narratives and video adventure games can easily see what a complex intertextual narrative he has produced. Taking the excerpt provided above, we can readily identify a range of other texts woven into his narrative.

The characters "Shang-Tsung", "Raiden" and "Kung Lao" are all characters in Mortal Kombat, an adventure game from the early 1990s produced originally by Nintendo (and now available as a computer game as well). King Loa is described on the Mortal Kombat official website as: "a troubled young warrior from the Order of Light Temple. He is a skilled Mortal Kombat fighter with incomparable focus and strength. Kung Lao was raised alongside other children from the temple and trained from birth to fight in the Mortal Kombat wars..." (see <http://www. mortalkombat. com>). Similarly, the character "Gora-Gora" can be found in the Nintendo game, The Ultimate Evil. Subsequent references in Tony's narrative to a skeleton army echo skeleton armies found in a range of Nintendo games including Dungeon Keeper II. Later in Tony's text, characters from the Nintendo (and computer) DOOM games appear in the adventure, such as "Demon Queen" and "Barons of Hell". The Warlock of Firetop Mountain who makes an early appearance as a character is actually the title of the first Fighting Fantasy Gamebook produced in the 1980s by Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone (1982, Allansia). The reference to "Snow Witch" echoes another Fighting Fantasy Gamebook titled, Caverns of the Snow Witch (Ian Livingstone, 1984, Penguin). This series of books-60 in all-were "quest games" that came with dice and maps and required role playing and a large amount of reading to plot and navigate the adventures written into them. The books were extremely popular in the 1980s, and

were distributed in English-in England, Australia and Canada-and in Japanese-in Japan.

Tony's text builds on his membership of the 'Video Action Games' Discourse, where he is an 'insider'. The knowledge of characters evident in his work comes only from commitment and proficiency as a games player and, of course, from having adequate command of the considerable textual requirements for playing the games successfully. These games are saturated in text. In addition, entire genres and 'libraries' of print texts (books, magazines, comics, 'cheats', manuals, etc.) circulate around this games Discourse. The Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks are one instance. Tony's narrative suggests close familiarity with these texts as well as with the text-mediated electronic games themselves.

Comment/critique-Counterproductive Politics of Genre

Despite promoting the text-context model, Australian genre theorists (for example, Martin, Rothery, Macken and Christie) have nonetheless emphasized the structural and linguistic features of texts at the expense of the social and cultural contexts of language use (as have teachers in their interpretations of the Queensland English syllabus). According to Kress (personal communication) this "focus on 'textual features' is misplaced" because it diverts attention from what is important. For Kress, genre features are everywhere in the text and cannot easily be isolated into grammatical components. They are present in every aspect of a text so that genre is for Kress less a matter of the overall shape and grammatical features of a text, but of the social relations that are coded everywhere in it. Kress explains what he means by using an example: "if you cut out the middle bit (or any bit) of any text you will know what the genre of the text is". This is because, according to Kress, text-making is generated by social practices that embody genres, making everything about the genre or genres in a text predictable and recognisable (Kress 1999).

Instead of focusing on structural and linguistic features in

the way the genre theorists do, Kress emphasises the social as being the generative force in all text making, and the individual as the agent, acting out of her his own interest (ibid., Kress 1993).

Moreover, Kress rightly points out that all texts-including those in genre proforma books-are composed of a multiplicity of genres. For example, Kress discusses how an interview can be a genre within the larger text of an issues-based documentary, which also contains, say, a panel discussion, a documentary film segment, and so on. Thus, genres are not stable in terms of a having a fixed and immutable use. Nevertheless, genres appear to become almost text archetypes in the hands of most genre theorists in Australia and in many ways this risks doing students a disservice by oversimplifying genres and their successful production.

A second and related problem, as we see it, is evident in what we call the 'proforma syndrome'. Genre theorists' emphasis on the structure and linguistic features of genres promotes decontextualized classroom practices. Books of genre proformas are among the worst examples of this decontextualisation and completely miss the discursive nature of genres (cf., Kress 1993, 1999, Lemke 1995). Our argument is that if genre approaches to literacy education are to work, genre needs to be conceived more like Discourse (Gee 1991, 1996). And it needs a properly contextualized pedagogy.

The games Discourse, for example, has its own demanding and sophisticated discourse. Tony has written his narrative out of the very kind of membership of and participation in mature ('insider') versions of Discourses that are increasingly identified as hallmarks of authentic learning and effective social practice (cf. Heath and McLaughlin 1994, Rogoff 1990, 1995; Lave and Wenger 1991; see Gee, Hull and Lankshear 1996 for a larger discussion). Effective literacy is precisely about having fluent mastery of the language uses of Discourses (Gee 1991, 1996). Powerful literacy is about having fluent mastery of the language uses of Discourses that carry high status in social settings. Mastery of the kind of literacy inchoate in Tony's narrative undoubtedly carries high status and attracts attention (Goldhaber 1997) as well

as other social rewards in a range of social contexts within youth/popular culture and the (adult) work world alike (Bennahum 1998; Rushkoff 1996a, 1996b). The same holds for Jacques. The brute fact is that school generally, and Tony's and Jacques' (see next section) classrooms specifically, are not among these contexts!

In summary, there must be more to genre than simply structure, linguistic feature and text stereotypes. Indeed, if 'genre theory' is to remain faithful to Halliday's original goal of developing a theory of language use, then it needs to be more than an abstracted linguistic form of language study. We need to ensure that genre production is richly contextualized within everyday practices and language uses. Likewise, we need to avoid diminishing the socially just effects of making text production strategies explicit to students by having them believe that genres are monolithic and unchanging.

2. 'G/genre', 'Strategy' and 'Tactics': A frame for re-presenting generic practices

Another student, Jacques, provides an interesting perspective on genre-based literacy education at the point of learning in the classroom. His teacher saw him as having serious difficulties with literacy, and in class Jacques did not understand at all the 'templates' and 'proformas' used by the teacher during the research period to introduce the class to 'compare and contrast' and 'expository argument.' Jacques himself told us: 'I'm not keen on language and that. I hate reading. I'm like my Dad, I'm not a pen man.' He found it difficult to concentrate, pay attention, and to understand the teacher's efforts to 'make the form and structure of genres and other language concepts explicit.

In class the teacher had developed a corner of the room as a 'Writing Center', where students could go to work on the generic text types they had to produce. During one two-day period we observed that he spent several hours in the Writing

Center making a tiny book (6cm X 4 cm) containing several stapled pages. On each page he wrote 2 or 3 words producing a 'narrative' of 15-20 words. (For example. 'This is J.P.'s truck. J.P. is going on holiday in his truck. J.P. likes going on holiday n his truck.') Other students found these hilarious when he read themout loud to them, and he eventually produced a series of six 'J. P. Stories.' His teacher, however, was not impressed and saw his activities as 'very childish' and as a means of avoiding writing and of not taking too seriously something he could not do.

When he was out of school, however, his approach to language and literacy in the context of larger social practices in which texts were embedded was very different. And his activity was much more like that of an adult than a child. For example, he enjoyed working with his father in the family's earthmoving and road construction business. He had learned to drive work vehicles at 7 years of age, and operated them under supervision regularly when working in his holidays. Jacques understood and valued learning in relation to being able to perform well as a worker. 'If you want to put gravel on a road you have to be able to work out how many meters you need.' His concept of learning failure was when a person could not apply learning and knowledge in practical contexts.

His immersion in a business culture in the home and his orientation toward work produced a very interesting literacy outcome. Prior to the summer holidays, and with some assistance from his mother and brother, Jacques produced on his father's computer a flier that he used to establish and advertise his own lawn mowing service. It contained a drawing of a man pushing a lawn mower and, beneath the picture, the following information.

J.Ps
Mowing Service
• Efficient, reliable service.
• Grass clippings removed.
• All edging done.
• First time lawn cut FREE! (only regular customers)
• For free quote Ph. 888 8888

Jacques delivered copies of his flier to all the homes in his area and soon he had a successful and profitable enterprise for earning money on weekends and in his holidays and spare time. When asked about the language in his text (the flier) Jacques explained that he had used 'First time lawn cut free' to attract clients. 'So that they will all got 'Oh yeah, this is great' (imitating a 'double take'). 'What was that number again?' (imitating someone frantically dialing a phone number). In the same way, his use of smaller font for 'Only regular customers' imitates commercial advertisements. It was obvious that Jacques understood the way language works in business discourses of this kind.

Similar differences between his classroom and wider world literacy practices were obvious in his literacy practices associated with his being a Jehovah's Witness. His family attended Theocratic School each week where Jacques regularly had to read and explain and give commentaries on texts from the Bible to groups of up to 100 people. These reading, speaking and exegetic performances are scrutinized and evaluated publicly by members of the listeners. They use official criteria and checklists (that is, templates and pro formas) provided in Theocratic School literature. To prepare for his presentations Jacques worked with his mother. Together they worked on writing Introductions and

Conclusions, and his mother would help him prepare for his actual presentation by reading the text herself onto a tape recording for Jacques to follow as he practices reading his presentation aloud.

G/genre, Uses and Tactics: Some Implications for Conceptions of Genres

There are various ways in which the differences between Jacques' literacy practices in the classroom and in his home and community might be understood. Our interpretation here draws on a distinction between Genres and genres (which parallels the distinction James Gee makes between Discourse and discourse and draws on). It also draws on concepts of Strategy, Uses and Tactics from the work of Michel de Certeau.

Gee uses Discourse to refer to socially recognised ways of using language (reading, writing, speaking, listening), gestures and other semiotics (images, sounds, graphics, signs, codes), as well as ways of thinking, believing, feeling, valuing, acting/doing and interacting in relation to people and things, such that we can be identified and recognised as being a member of a socially meaningful group, or as playing a socially meaningful role (cf Gee 1991, 1996, 1998). To be in, or part of, a Discourse means that others can recognise us as being a 'this' or a 'that' (a pupil, mother, priest, footballer, mechanic), or a particular 'version' of a this or that (a reluctant pupil, a doting mother, a radical priest, a 'bush' mechanic) by virtue of how we are using language, believing, feeling, acting, dressing, doing, and so on. Language is a dimension of Discourse, but only one dimension, and Gee uses discourse (with a small "d") to mark this relationship.

We suggest distinguishing between Genre and genre in a similar way and seeing it as a distinction falling within Discourse. By Genres we mean embodied and contextualized practices that are inherent in but do not 'exhaust' Discourses. Hence, within the Discourse of being a teacher,

for example, one will participate in/enact diverse Genres, such as Explaining, Reporting, Interviewing, Persuading, Instructing, Narrating, Arguing, etc. Within each of these one will produce texts (oral or written or both)/use signs, employ semiotics, etc. These textual productions-which may vary considerably within particular Genre enactments depending on context and situation-may be thought of as genre exemplars. They are like discourse is to Discourse: the textual bits.

We would argue that people produce/handle genres better or worse to the extent that they are 'insiders to' embodied and contextualized practices of Genres and, furthermore, to the Discourses in which these Genres are embedded. To try and teach genres divorced from contexts (embodied, material, mentored, and motivated) of Genres is like trying to learn to play a sport by only attending training or practice sessions.

Of course, what we are proposing here is not the only way of looking at genres from a more deliberately socio-cultural prespective. Gunther Kress, for example, posits that " 'genre' and 'text' are not the same thing: the latter includes the former, though there is no text or textual element that is not generically formed" (1999: 5). On the other hand, some genre theorists and commentators, as Kress also points out, see genres and texts as identical. And others don't.

Nevertheless, for us, in the case of Jacques' production of his flier, he was building on insider knowledge of business Discourse to enact/participate in an entrepreneurial Genre of advertising-informing-selling. And his generic artifact was effective (powerful, in fact) and appropriate. The opposite was true for most of his classroom generic production. And where his 'narratives' proved successful was not within the Genre of narrating, but of Joking.

In fact, Jacques' generic productions provide an interesting perspective on the concepts of Strategy, Use and Tactics, along the lines suggested by de Certeau (1984). Our argument at this point is tentative and exploratory, but we believe there is potential for further development of the ideas here.

de Certeau develops these concepts as part of his framework for investigating the nature and politics of cultural production within, what he calls, the practice of everyday life. He is interested, although not exclusively, in redressing research that portrays consumers as passive effects or reflexes of the practices of producers. Without in any way denying the relations of differential power and advantage that play out across social and cultural groupings everywhere and everyday, he wants to identify, understand, and explain the power of the weak and the 'wins' they gain in their everyday practice. They gain these 'wins' by using-making use of-the constraining order of the regulatory fields in which they must participate (at work, in school, at leisure, in domestic life, etc), and by employing tactics.

de Certeau illustrates his concept of 'use' by reference to a North African migrant being obliged to live in a low-income housing estate in France and to use the French of, say, Paris or Roubaix. This person may insinuate into the system imposed on him "the ways of 'dwelling' (in a house or in a language) peculiar to his native Kabylia". This introduces a degree of plurality into the system. Similarly, the indigenous peoples of Latin America often used

> the laws, practices, and representations imposed on them … to ends other than those of their conquerors … subverting them from within … by many different ways of using them in the service of rules, customs or convictions foreign to the colonization which they could not escape (1984: 31-32).

'Tactics' is construed by de Certeau as 'an art of the weak.' It involves the art of 'pulling tricks' through having a sense of opportunities presented by a particular occasion within a context in which Others (subjects of will and power; notably, the power to define and control Discourses) have defined their own place from which to 'manage relations with an exteriority composed of targets or threats.' These subjects of will and power can develop strategies by which to identify and manage relations with their 'targets' (customers, competitors, enemies, others). Strategy is an art

of the strong (e.g., a scientific institution that defines and sustains knowledge by the power to provide itself with its own place). All the weak can do is manoeuver within the controlled and managed space, 'taking advantage of opportunities' to get a win-albeit a win whose 'fruits' they cannot keep.

We have not the space to develop the argument here, but would suggest that established Genres are involved at the level of strategy. Managing 'targets' involves, among other things, subordinating them to the rule of Genres as part of the order established within that place controlled by the subject.

Interestingly, we find in Jacques' textual productions elements of use, tactics and strategy. He uses the constraining order of the place he is obliged to inhabit-the classroom-and its language to enact/promote/serve other values and ends (humour, gaining approval, etc.). Alternatively, we can see him employing a tactic to pull a trick within the enemy's field of vision and control: getting a 'win' from the 'writing center.'

We believe pedagogy should encourage development of a sense of tactics and reward tactics and recognize them more than is usually the case. After all, people are rarely powerful in all domains of practice, and most people have limited power in almost every domain. An education in the interests of all should encourage the weak in their command of tactics.

On the other hand, Jacques is able to enlist G/genre in something like the sense of a strategy in developing his lawn mowing enterprise. His activity here conforms to the logic of making something possible and at the same time determining its characteristics by having a certain power in the first place (de Certeau 1984, 36). He can constitute himself as a subject and postulate a kind of place from which to manage relations with an exteriority (future customers). He can do this as a result of his command of a Discourse (and knowing that he can draw on some economic and moral support from his business-oriented family) and the Genre of advertising/ informing/attracting.

3. Attention economy and new times and new technologies and new practices.

We need to get beyond research/study of familiar genres. New genres are emerging continually as new practices and new technologies co-evolve. Moreover, a lot of what we are told comprises powerful symbolic production these days involves precisely the practice of deliberately blurring and subverting genres, and breaking the rules. There are at least two lines of argument here. One comes from Lyotard's account of knowledge in the postmodern condition, according to which maximising 'performativity' depends increasingly on making new moves in language games. This puts a new emphasis on 'style', creativity, 'originality' etc. Possibilities for 'breaking rules' exist on a number of levels. An exploratory taxonomy being developed with Michael Peters in relation to a concept of 'performance epistemology' comprises the following :

1. At the most elementary level, a 'new move' within a language game (which might be as minimal as generating an idiosyncratic phrase, a striking sentence, and so on);

2. A new 'set of moves' in a language game which, collectively, add up to a new strategy (e.g., new ways of using images or text fonts in web page design)

3. A new set of strategies

4. Inventing a new rule in a language game (e.g., a new 'standard' for checking validity of data within qualitative research);

5. Inventing a set of rules which, collectively, amount to a new language game. This might be done by applying various kinds of principles in a context where there are no existing exemplars or norms showing to proceed, but where all one has to go on is experience of previous successful 'moves.' For

example,

> " 'Lifting' a genre from one context and putting it in an other (lifting it out of its 'proper' social context and inserting it in another) is an innovative act, an act of creativity" (Kress 1999: 11).

Push 'raves' and social commentaries like the SUCK website <www.suck.com> are actually new moves in a language game-indeed. They may well be new language games--because they challenge conventional conceptions and practices of both texts and websites. SUCK, Stephen Johnson's FEED and Douglas Rushkoff's MEDIASQUAT email newsletter and interactive commentary that comprise mixtures of commentaries, reader input, comments and feedback, links that enhance the meaning of the text rather than just illustrate it and so on, all call for slew of Genre and genre understandings (e.g., how to maintain tenor across webpages, how to make cohesive ties work in an online environment and to know if they're even needed, how to encourage readers to pay attention to your website, how to best align the website with particular Discourses).

A second line of argument comes from the idea of an emerging 'attention economy'. This is premised on the fact that the human capacity to produce material things outstrips the net capacity to consume the things that are produced - such are the irrational contingencies of distribution. In this context, 'material needs at the level of creature comfort are fairly well satisfied for those in a position to demand them' (Goldhaber 1997) - the great minority, it should noted, of people at present. Nonetheless, for this powerful minority, the need for attention becomes increasingly important, and increasingly the focus of their productive activity. Hence, the attention economy:

> [T]he energies set free by the successes of … the money-industrial economy go more and more in the direction of obtaining attention. And that leads to growing competition for what is increasingly scarce, which is of course attention. It sets up an unending scramble, a scramble that also increases the demands

> on each of us to pay what scarce attention we can (Goldhaber 1998).

Within an attention economy, individuals seek stages - performing spaces - from which they can perform for the widest/largest possible audiences. Goldhaber observes that the various spaces of the Internet lend themselves perfectly to this model. He notes that gaining attention is related to originality. It is difficult, says Goldhaber, to get new attention 'by repeating exactly what you or someone else has done before.' Consequently, the attention economy is based on 'endless originality, or at least attempts at originality.'

Moreover, without even considering the possible impact of consciously motivated rule-breaking changes in pursuit of originality, change is well and truly in process for familiar textual products and forms. As Kress observes,

> Forms of writing (in English), at the moment, bear the traces or are the effects of a social, economic, technological and political history of about 500 years. When writing will have become, (with that new technology), speech displayed as graphic form on a screen, it will begin also to display the effects of the new social, economic, and political givens. Above all, speech displayed as graphic form on a screen, will develop in co-existence with image displayed on that screen - perhaps at times still reproduced as 'hard copy' on a page or even in a book! (Kress 1999)

Our efforts as linguists will increasingly be diverted toward documenting, understanding, predicting and, perhaps, even projecting such changes.

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